

17. *NETTION PUNCTATUM* (Burch.) : *Salvad. Cat. B.* xxvii. p. 265.

Querquedula hottentota Sharpe, *op. cit.* p. 757.

Male. 11/9/98. Lake Barana, Inhambane.

“Legs and feet turquoise-blue, inclined to leaden; bill black from the nostrils, the black part widening out and almost covering the entire bill at the point; basal part of the bill below the nostrils turquoise, running into a very narrow line towards the point and continuing right round; lower mandible more leaden, soft skin between; iris black.”—
H. F. F.

IX.—*Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club.*

Nos. LVI. & LVII.

No. LVI. (October 31st, 1898).

THE fifty-fifth Meeting of the Club was held at the Restaurant Frascati, 32 Oxford Street, on Wednesday, the 19th of October, 1898. *Chairman* : P. L. SCLATER, F.R.S. Forty-two Members and seven guests were present.

THE TREASURER announced that the first business of the Meeting was to choose the Officers of the Club for the new Session, and the following were unanimously elected by show of hands :—

Chairman : P. L. SCLATER, F.R.S.

Vice-Chairmen { PHILIP CROWLEY.
H. J. PEARSON.

MR. W. E. DE WINTON was elected a Member of the Committee in the place of Major A. P. LOYD, who retired by rotation.

THE CHAIRMAN gave the following address :—

BROTHER MEMBERS OF THE B. O. C.—

On opening the Seventh Session of the British Ornithologists' Club, I will venture to trouble you with a few words.

As the Editors of 'The Ibis' have already remarked in their preface to the volume for the present year, one of the leading ornithological events of 1898 is the completion of the 'Catalogue of Birds.' The twenty-sixth volume of this work, prepared by Dr. Bowdler Sharpe and Mr. Ogilvie Grant, the only one required to finish the series, will, I am assured, be laid before the Trustees at their meeting on the 22nd inst., and be ready for issue very shortly afterwards. Thus, after a period of twenty-five years, this most important piece of ornithological work has been brought to a conclusion. No human product is perfect, and the Catalogue has been, and will be, the subject of many criticisms. One obvious defect in it is its want of uniformity, the various authors having been permitted, owing to the wise discretion of the authorities, very liberal opportunities for the expression of their own views in their respective portions, although a general adherence to one plan has been rightly insisted upon. But when the enormous amount of labour required for this work and the absolute necessity of employing more than one author upon such a huge task are considered, it will be obvious that greater uniformity was practically unattainable. In the case of the Catalogues of Reptiles and Batrachians, where the series of specimens and species was not so large, the herpetologists are fortunate in having had the whole of the work performed upon a uniform system by the indefatigable energy of a single naturalist.

The 'Catalogue of Birds,' as complete in twenty-seven volumes, gives us an account of 11,617 species of this Class of Vertebrates, divided into 2255 genera and 124 families. It has been prepared by eleven authors, all Members of the British Ornithologists' Union, and with one exception, I believe (who is not a resident in England), now or formerly Members of this Club. I think it will be universally allowed that we have, in this case, a great and most useful undertaking brought to a successful conclusion.

Another good piece of ornithological work, likewise the product of a Member of this Club, which has just made its appearance, is Mr. Beddard's volume on the 'Structure and

Classification of Birds.' It seems to me to be a most useful Manual on this subject, profusely illustrated, and full of convenient references to further information on various points which it would have been impossible to compress into a single volume. It will be found to be a mine of wealth to those who choose to dig in it, and contains a good summary, not only of the results arrived at by Mr. Beddard himself, but also by Garrod and Forbes, his illustrious predecessors in the office which he holds.

Mr. A. H. Evans, whose volume upon Birds for the 'Cambridge Natural History' we have been long expecting, informs me that this work is finished, except the index, and will be shortly published. We shall all welcome its appearance with the greatest pleasure. A second work that Mr. Evans, together with Mr. Scott Wilson, is engaged upon is the 'Aves Hawaiienses,' of which we have long been waiting for the final part. This, I am assured, is now in a forward state, and is likely to be issued without further delay.

From information received from Mr. Rothschild, I am pleased to be able to say that his somewhat parallel illustrated work on the 'Avifauna of Laysan,' of which the last part was issued in 1893, will also be shortly brought to a conclusion, and that the third and final part will be issued in the course of next year. Taken together, these two works will form a most valuable contribution to our knowledge of the Avifauna of the Northern Pacific. I must also not forget to mention, among recent contributions to our science, the excellent work of Dr. Meyer and Mr. Wigglesworth on the birds of Celebes—one of the most elaborate and complete ornithological monographs on the birds of a special district ever prepared. Celebes, I may remark, as a debatable land between the Australian and Oriental Regions, was in special need of the full treatment and discussion which it has received from the authors of this work.

But the brethren of the B. O. C. and their friends, I think I may say, are at present not less active in the field than in the cabinet. We are fortunate in having with

us to-night the two principal members of the new expedition to Socotra and Southern Arabia which will leave England on the 28th inst. It will, of course, take up Natural History in every branch, but with Dr. Forbes and Mr. Ogilvie Grant as its leaders, and a trained taxidermist in attendance, we need not fear that the interests of Ornithology will in any way be overlooked. In Socotra itself much has been already done, but little or nothing has been ascertained ornithologically of the southern coast of Arabia, and we know, from Bent's writings, that even in this commonly supposed barren district, bird-life is abundant in certain spots, which we trust may be within reach of the Expedition.

Besides the Socotran Expedition many other explorations by various members of the B. O. U. are in progress or in contemplation. Capt. Boyd Alexander, who has worked so well in the Cape Verde Islands, is struggling through the middle of Africa from the Cape to Cairo. Under present circumstances he seems likely to come out successfully, and will, no doubt, bring information on birds, if not specimens, with him. Mr. Lort Phillips hopes to return to his favourite quarters in Somali-land during the course of the present winter, and expects to get together the supplementary materials still required for the preparation of his proposed work on the birds of that most interesting country. Mr. John Whitehead, who has added so much to our knowledge of the zoology of the Philippines, proposes to return to the same country very shortly, in order to continue his researches in a field which he knows so well and in which he takes such great interest. Before leaving, he has placed in the hands of the Editors of 'The Ibis' a series of valuable field-notes on the birds collected during his last journey. These will appear in the forthcoming volume of our Journal. Mr. Alfred Sharpe, C.B., who is shortly returning to his post in Nyasaland, promises to continue the employment of collectors in different parts of that Protectorate, the zoology of which he, following in the footsteps of Sir Harry Johnston, has already done so much to investigate.

Finally, I may remark that, as will be seen on turning over the pages of contents in the last volume of 'The Ibis,' we have correspondents interested in our favourite subject in nearly every part of the world, and that the great difficulty of the Editors is to compress so many valuable contributions within the compass of an annual volume.

Before resuming my seat, I wish to say one more word. Our Government, in connection with that of Egypt, has just taken possession of an enormous district in Africa, probably nearly equal to half Europe in extent. It sternly warns all intruders off, even when they are alleged to be of "no political influence." When it comes to regulate the administration of these new territories, it is to be hoped that the interests of Natural History will not be entirely overlooked. Although the Upper Nile districts have been traversed and investigated by many well-known naturalists, there is still very much to be done in these teeming regions of animal-life. We Englishmen are ready and willing to undertake, by individual efforts, much work that in other countries is provided for by State-Explorers; but it is not too much to expect that our Government should at least help us by providing adequate facilities and occasional assistance, and even, perhaps, by contributions to the expensive process of bringing the results thus acquired completely before the world.

A complete copy of the twenty-sixth volume of the 'Catalogue of Birds' was laid on the table by Dr. BOWDLER SHARPE.

MR. G. H. CATON HAIGH exhibited and made remarks upon a Warbler, *Lusciniola schwarzi* (Radde), which he had shot on the 1st of October, near North Cotes, Lincolnshire. The large bastard-primary easily distinguished the members of this genus (and those of *Herbivocula*) from the *Phylloscopi*. The summer-home of *L. schwarzi* appeared to be in South-eastern Siberia, and reached about as far west as Tomsk, according to Godlewski, who had mentioned the powerful note

of the bird; this was described by Mr. Haigh as disproportionately loud, and it had led to the thorough beating-out of the hedge in which the bird was skulking. It would be remembered that easterly winds had prevailed for a considerable time. So far, *L. schwarzi* seemed not to have been previously recorded within the European area. [For a coloured figure of the specimen, see *supra*, Pl. I.]

Mr. HAIGH also exhibited a specimen of a young female of the Barred Warbler (*Sylvia nisoria*), which he had shot near North Cotes on the 5th of September last. This was the thirteenth example obtained in the British Islands.

Mr. N. F. TICEHURST exhibited a Pectoral Sandpiper (*Tringa maculata*) obtained between Lydd and Rye, in Kent, on the 2nd of August, 1898.

The Hon. WALTER ROTHSCHILD sent a pair of a new *Pitta*, which he described as follows:—

PITTA MEEKI, sp. n.

Superficially resembling the common *P. mackloti* from New Guinea, from which, however, it differs in the absence of the large black spot on the throat, which is only indicated by a dusky shade, the paler and more greyish chin and upper throat, the light brown (not deep rufous) hind-neck, and the pale greyish-brown (not blackish) crown.

Hab. Rossel Island, where Mr. Albert S. Meek has collected a small series.

Mr. ROTHSCHILD also sent for exhibition a skin of the rare *Pitta novæ-hiberniæ*, Ramsay. This species had been long ago described by Dr. Ramsay and the differences from *P. mackloti* had been stated in the original description. Count Salvadori afterwards expressed an opinion that it was the same as *P. mackloti*, because he had seen specimens from New Britain which did not differ from *P. mackloti*—evidently in the belief that the ornis of New Ireland was the same as that of New Britain. Now Captain Cayley Webster had sent a series of

a *Pitta* from New Hanover which agreed perfectly with the description of Ramsay, and differed much from *P. mackloti* in the absence of the black throat and breast-band, as well as in having the nape and hind-neck bright red. The species must therefore, for the present, bear the name of *P. novæ-hiberniæ*.

Mr. ROTHSCHILD further described and sent for exhibition, together with its nearest ally, *N. melanotis*, a pair of a new *Nesomimus*, which he described as follows :—

NESOMIMUS CARRINGTONI, sp. n.

Nearest to *N. melanotis*, from which it differs in its longer bill, shorter wing, somewhat paler upper surface, and less heavy black spots on the flanks. Wing, ♂ 110, ♀ 100 mm.; tail, ♂ 110, ♀ 105; culmen, ♂ 34, ♀ 32.

Hab. Barrington Island, Galapagos.

Mr. ROTHSCHILD also sent for exhibition specimens of *Tanysiptera rosseliana*, *Syma megarhyncha*, Salvad., *Strepera rosa-alba*, De Vis (= *Cracticus louisianensis*, Tristr.), *Parotia helenæ*, De Vis, which, with the exception of the *Tanysiptera* and *Cracticus*, had not before been seen in this country, nor shown to the Club, and a series of *Phonygamus jamesi*, Sharpe, showing the plumages at different ages.

Mr. ERNST HARTERT described the following new birds and exhibited their type specimens, together with examples of allied species for comparison :—

PODARGUS MEEKI, sp. n.

Intermediate in size between *P. intermedius*, Hartert, and *P. ocellatus*, Q. & G., and differing from both in the female not being rufous, but apparently always brownish, and much more heavily marked with black on the under surface than the male and darker above. Wing 190–195 mm., tail 167–180.

Discovered by Albert S. Meek on Sudest Island.

ÆGOTHELES PULCHER, sp. n.

Similar to *Æ. insignis*, Salvad., from Arfak, but differing

in its larger size, and in the absence of round buff spots on the back and the middle of the breast. The upper wing-coverts have no blackish bars; the inner webs of the remiges are deep blackish brown, the outer webs chestnut-rufous with some faint blackish spots on the first three primaries, but without light markings. The central rectrices are chestnut-rufous with some narrow blackish cross-bars, but without any light markings. Under tail-coverts pale rufous at base, buffy white at the tip, with a narrow rufous border. Wing 172 mm., tail approximately 150 (very much abraded), tarsus 21.

One specimen from the mountains of British New Guinea.

PACHYCEPHALA ROSSELIANA, sp. n.

Somewhat intermediate between *P. melanura* with a black tail and *P. collaris* with an olive tail, but having the tail blackish, olive at the base, the tips and edges seen on the outer webs of the rectrices broader on the central pair. The yellow collar on the hind-neck is narrower than in *P. collaris*, and slightly interrupted in the middle by an olive-green patch. The feathers of the thighs are black at the base, yellow at the tip, and with a white spot on one web before the yellow tip. Female above dark olive-brown, more greenish on the rump and upper tail-coverts. Tail with the outer webs more olive than in the male. Chin and throat white, with some dusky tips to the feathers; breast and abdomen yellow, separated from the white throat by an ill-defined brownish band. Wing in the male 64–68 mm., tail 68.

Discovered by Albert S. Meek, on Rossel Island.

PACHYCEPHALA ALBERTI, sp. n.

Closely allied to *P. griseiceps*, G. R. Gray, but with a longer and more powerful bill; throat and breast with more distinct dark shaft-lines in the adult birds, tail with very distinct dark cross-bars in certain lights, wing and tail longer. Wing 87–89 mm., tail 67–68.

Discovered on Sudest Island by Albert S. Meek, in whose honour it is named. It is, perhaps, only a subspecies of

P. griseiceps, another very distinct subspecies of which is *P. jobiensis*, Salvad.

CYCLOPSITTACUS INSEPARABILIS, sp. n.

Mr. A. S. Meek has sent a fine series of a new *Cyclopsittacus* from Sudest Island, in which the sexes are alike in coloration, and resemble very much the female of *Cyclopsittacus virago*, Hartert, from Fergusson Island, except that the sides of the head are green and not bluish as in the female of *C. virago*. In the latter species the sexes are widely different.

Mr. OGILVIE GRANT exhibited on behalf of Mr. J. D. La Touche an example of a new species of Short-wing:—

BRACHYPTERYX CAROLINÆ La Touche, sp. n.

Adult male. Very similar to the adult female of *S. nipalensis*, the chest and fore-neck being largely mixed with white. Total length 5·2 inches, culmen 0·48, wing 2·45, tail 1·5, tarsus 1·1.

Adult female. Differs from the male in having the white eyebrow-stripe nearly obsolete, and the fore-neck and chest nearly uniform pale ochraceous-brown. Total length 5 inches, culmen 0·45, wing 2·3, tail 1·35, tarsus 1·1.

As in *B. nipalensis*, the bill is relatively slender; in the closely allied *B. leucophrys*, from Java and Lombok, the bill is stouter and the upper parts darker.

Hab. Kuatun, N.W. Fohkien.

Mr. OGILVIE GRANT exhibited on behalf of Mr. C. B. Rickett the type of a new species of Warbler:—

LUSCINIOLA MELANORHYNCHA Rickett, sp. n.

Adult male. Nearest to *L. russula* (Slater), but at once distinguished by its black bill, differently shaped wing, longer tail, and darker colour, especially on the sides, flanks, and under tail-coverts, which are brown instead of pale buff. The 2nd primary considerably shorter than the 10th, the 5th slightly longer than 4th and 6th. Total length 5·5 inches, culmen 0·4, wing 2, tail 2·3, tarsus 0·75.

Hab. Kuatun, N.W. Fohkien.

Mr. Grant remarked :—“ Both this species and the bird described under the name of *Cettia russula* by the Rev. H. H. Slater have twelve tail-feathers and belong to the genus *Lusciniola*, the latter species being nearly allied to *L. intermedia* (Oates). Though *L. russula* superficially resembles *Cettia pallidipes*, with which Mr. Slater compared it, it is structurally very different.”

Mr. GRANT also exhibited a specimen of the genus *Eulacostoma* of De Vis, from Mt. Albert Edward, in S.E. New Guinea; it was apparently a young individual of *E. nigritorque*, De Vis, but had no black pectoral collar and a good deal of rufous on the wings.

Mr. D. LE SOUËF brought for exhibition nests and eggs of *Manucodia gouldi*, *Graucalus swainsoni*, and *Ptilorhis alberti*, from Northern Queensland. He also showed, with the aid of a lime-light lantern, a remarkable series of photographs of the nests and eggs of Australian birds, taken by himself during his expeditions in that continent.

Mr. SCLATER stated that on the 27th of June last he had had the pleasure of visiting a nesting-place of the Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*) in Holland, which he had not previously seen, and had found about 300 pairs breeding there in the reeds on one side of a lake. The lake was fortunately within a large enclosed area owned by a private individual, and strictly preserved. Neither eggs nor birds were allowed to be disturbed, and there was every prospect of this (believed to be the largest breeding-place of the Spoonbill now existing in Holland) being maintained securely. Two other nesting-places of this bird formerly visited by Mr. Selater, one on the Nieuwerkerker Platt in 1867 (see Gould's 'Birds of Great Britain,' iv. pl. 22) and the other on the Horster Meer in 1877 (see 'Ibis,' 1877, p. 413), had been destroyed by the drainage of the swamps in which they were situated.

No. LVII. (November 28th, 1898).

THE fifty-sixth Meeting of the Club was held at the Restaurant Frascati, 32 Oxford Street, on Wednesday, the 16th of November, 1898. *Chairman* : P. L. SCLATER, F.R.S. Twenty-three Members and six guests were present.

The Hon. WALTER ROTHSCHILD sent for exhibition an egg of the "Twelve-Wired Bird of Paradise" (*Seleucides ignotus* or *S. albus*). It had been found in an open nest in a Pandanus-swamp on the Vanapa River in British New Guinea, on a Pandanus tree. The nest was a large structure, about 10 inches across and 6 inches high, consisting externally of dry Pandanus leaves, then of pieces of rotten wood, and lastly of small twigs, the cup being rather flat and by no means softly lined. The single egg found resembled closely those of other *Paradiseidæ*, and especially those of the genus *Ptilorhis*, being of about the size of a Rook's egg, and of a cream colour, with more or less longitudinal rufous-brown and purplish-grey spots, which were most frequent near the thick end. It measured 40 mm. in length, and 22·5 on its broadest diameter.

Mr. ERNST HARTERT exhibited specimens of four new species of "Thickheads" (*Pachycephala*) and described them as follows :—

PACHYCEPHALA KUEHNI, sp. n.

Resembles closely *P. cinerascens*, Salvad., from Ternate, Batjan, Tidore, Halmageira, and Morotai, but the male differs in having the abdomen and breast ochraceous buff, the throat pale brownish, while the abdomen in the adult male of *P. cinerascens* is white, or greyish white, and the throat and breast are ashy grey. The upper surface is slightly more brownish. The female differs from the female of *P. cinerascens* in being browner above, and in having the underside ochraceous buff, without any grey, and the dark streaks along the shafts are much more developed.

Hab. Little Key Island. Named in honour of Mr. Heinrich Kuehn, who has sent a small series of both sexes, adult and young, of this new species.

PACHYCEPHALA EXAMINATA, sp. n.

Differs from *P. lineolata*, Wall., of the Sula Islands, in having the abdomen (which is white with or without a faint ochreous tinge in *P. lineolata*) ochraceous buff, and the under tail-coverts buff instead of white. The wing is a little longer, measuring 81–82 mm. The back is more brownish, the grey cap thus becoming more conspicuously in contrast to the back. In the male the throat is white, the chest washed with grey. The female has the underside uniform ochraceous buff and the wing only about 78 mm. long. (For the name of the Sula form cf. 'Novitates Zoologicae,' vol. iv. p. 131.) If the name *P. griseonota* should be adopted it could apply only to the Sula bird and not to the bird from Buru, judging from the description.

Hab. Buru.

PACHYCEPHALA MEEKI, sp. n.

♂ *ad.* Similar to *P. leucogaster*, but differs in having the black crown less sharply defined and almost passing into the colour of the back, which is much darker and more blackish than in *P. leucogaster*. The tail and upper tail-coverts are almost pure black and much darker than in the last-named species. The sides of the breast and abdomen are grey, not white. The wing is shorter, measuring only about 82 mm. (against about 90 in *P. leucogaster*). *P. meeki* also differs from *P. arcitorques* in its grey sides and darker back, the latter species being more closely allied to *P. leucogaster* than to *P. meeki*. Measurements of the male: wing 81–82, tail 64, culmen from base 17 mm.

♀ *ad.* Above mouse-brown, more greyish on the upper tail-coverts; an indistinct line over the eyes and ear-coverts rufous-brown; throat buffy white; remainder of under surface rusty buff; chest with some small and narrow blackish shaft-lines; middle of abdomen white; sides of

chest and flanks washed with grey; under wing- and under tail-coverts pale buff.

Hab. Rossel Island, Louisiade Archipelago.

PACHYCEPHALA CONTEMPTA, sp. n.

The yellow *Pachycephala* of Lord Howe Island has been treated as the same as *P. gutturalis* in the 'Catalogue of Birds,' vol. viii., where at least three different species or subspecies are united under the title of *P. gutturalis*; but *P. contempta*, as I propose to call the Lord Howe Island form, differs from *P. gutturalis* in having the basal portion of the tail for more than half of its length greenish, often for two-thirds of its length, in having the bill stronger and longer, in having the yellow band on the hind-neck interrupted by pale olive-green in the middle, and in being generally larger. Wing 92-94, tail 83, culmen from base 17-18 mm. Another closely allied form is *P. occidentalis*, which, however, has the base of the tail grey and the bill rather short.

Mr. HARTERT further characterized a new Humming-bird, which he called

CYANOLESBIA BERLEPSCHI, sp. n.

This was described as the most beautiful of all the *Cyanolesbiæ*, and perhaps the most distinct species of the genus, being more different than any of those *inter se*. The female was easily recognizable from that of the allied species in having the breast and entire abdomen white instead of cinnamon-rufous. The male seemed to be nearest to that of *Cyanolesbia margarethæ* from Caracas and *C. kingi* from Bogotá, but the outer tail-feathers were longer and much wider, of a peculiar glittering metallic blue; the central rectrices were not green as in *C. margarethæ*, but purplish blue with a greenish glitter at the tips. Wing 71, tail 155, outer rectrices 9-10 mm. wide.

Mr. Hartert stated that the Hon. Walter Rothschild had received a male and four females of this bird from the hills of Cumana in Venezuela, and that there was a second male from Caripé in the British Museum, with the tail not fully grown.

The typical specimens were collected by Mr. Caracciolo and sent to the Tring Museum by Mr. André, of Trinidad.

Mr. HOWARD SAUNDERS exhibited, on behalf of Mr. W. Drury, a specimen of the Wood-Sandpiper, *Totanus glareola*, shot by the latter near Lough Cullin, co. Mayo, on the 5th of September last. Only three examples of this species had been previously recorded from Ireland, and all of them from one locality, viz. in co. Wicklow.

Dr. R. BOWDLER SHARPE exhibited a specimen of the Black-headed Weaver-Finch (*Munia atricapilla*) which had been presented to the British Museum by Mr. G. Hubert Woods, who had shot it out of a flock of twelve individuals in Suffolk on the 26th of October last.

Mr. HARTERT stated that he had also seen a small flock of these Weaver-Finches in the reed-beds on the Tring Reservoir, and that one had been recently shot there.

Dr. BOWDLER SHARPE read a paper on the present status of the birds in the "British" List, which he believed to amount at the present moment to 445. A discussion ensued, in which the Chairman, Mr. Howard Saunders, Mr. H. E. Dresser, Mr. H. J. Pearson, Mr. W. E. De Winton, Mr. Hartert and others took part. It was decided that the subject should be further discussed at a subsequent meeting of the Club.

Mr. ROBERT READ made some remarks on the apparent variation in the downs of certain species of Ducks at different seasons of the year. Specimens would be exhibited at the next meeting of the Club, when the subject would be further explained.